1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF14 Central China AF14

HEALTH AND SANITATION

I. BACKGROUND

Organized public health as part of the responsibilities of government in China may be traced back as far as 1902, when the Peiyang Sanitary Department was established. Because of plagues in 1911 and 1917, organizations for the prevention of epidemics also came into being. In 1927, under the Nationalist Government, a Ministry of Health, later reorganized into the National Health Administration, sought to solve problems of public health. Among the six departments of the National Health Administration was the Department of Health Organization and Services, which promoted local health work, local sanitary projects, and local training of health personnel; another was the Department of Epidemic Prevention, which was charged with the prevention and control of epidemic and endemic diseases, anti-epidemic services, and the manufacture of biological products.[1]

744

However, peaceful development of health work was greatly disrupted by the long and destructive war of resistance against Japan (1937-45) and the internal conflicts which followed. Much of the

744
708

---

1. China Handbook 1937-1945, compiled by China Ministry of Information, New York, McMillan, 1949, p. 490.

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF14 Central China AF14

government effort in that period was devoted to the Army Medical Service, which was affiliated with the Ministry of Military Affairs from the beginning of 1938.[2]

744
708

In May 1946, after World War II, the Nationalist Government officially returned to Nanking. Amid the manifold attempts at rehabilitation and reconstruction, the restoration and reorganization of health work was begun. Some statistics for Central-South China are available for the years 1946-47, but it is clear that little could have been accomplished within so short a time. In 1947 there were in the six provinces of Central-South China 90 government health organizations with 2,768 hospital beds and 8,434 personnel, including 1,501 doctors. There were 2,809 additional public health agencies on the county level in these provinces.[3] As to preventive medical care, 3,630,250 people in Central-South China received vaccination against smallpox in 1946, some 4,315,642 received inoculations against cholera, and 1,739,520 received vaccine to combat both cholera and typhoid.[4] (For the purpose of comparison, it should be noted that the population of Central-South China in 1948 was reported to be 130,540,797. For details on the

744

2. The China Year Book, 1938-39, Shanghai, Commercial Press, 1939, p. 652.

3. Chung-hua Min-kuo T'ung-chi Nien-chien [Statistical Yearbook of China], Nanking, Bureau of Statistics, 1948, pp. 341-42.

4. Ibid., p. 346.